

Abstracts

International IPP/GCSC Symposium | June 4-6, 2025

Acts of Writing: Cultural Practices, Knowledge Construction, Authorship

IPP/GCSC | Conference Room
Ground Floor
Otto-Behaghel-Straße 12
35394 Giessen



KEYNOTES

Rereading Childhood: Autobiography, Criticism, and Memory

Prof. Dr. Timothy C. Baker (*University of Aberdeen*)

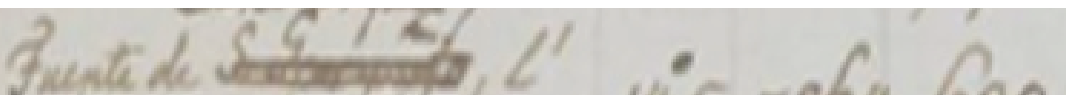
All literary criticism is to some extent autobiographical: the way we select and analyse texts says as much about us at the works themselves. Authorship can be seen as an act of rereading as much as writing, and tracks our own changing relationships with texts over time. Likewise, many current writers are explicitly choosing to blur the lines between literary criticism and memoir to show how the categories of reader and writer always overlap. In this session Timothy C. Baker will be reading from and discussing their recent hybrid memoir *Reading My Mother Back: A Memoir in Childhood Animal Stories*, in which they revisit children's classics to tell a story of grief, trauma, and family secrets. Baker's memoir tells the story of his mother's life, and death, through the animal stories they shared, both familiar and less-well-known. The memoir touches on memory, loneliness, disability, and religion, and shows how literature can provide a way to understand our experiences and connect with what we have lost. *Reading My Mother Back* offers a bold and personal view of why the stories we read, share, and write about matter.

Timothy C. Baker is Personal Chair in Scottish and Contemporary Literature at the University of Aberdeen, having previously studied Cognitive Science at Vassar College and English Literature at the University of Edinburgh. Their work centres on Scottish literature, queer studies, and environmental humanities. They are the author of five books, most recently *Writing Animals: Language, Suffering, and Animality in Twenty-First-Century Fiction* (2019), *Reading My Mother Back: A Memoir in Childhood Animal Stories* (2022), and *New Forms of Environmental Writing: Gleaning and Fragmentation* (2022). Baker's writing focuses on both human-animal and environmental relationality, experimental literary forms, and interdisciplinary modes of reading, alongside a longstanding interest in literature and community. They are currently co-editing the forthcoming *Routledge Companion to Scottish Literature*, and have recently published in *Green Letters*, *C21 Literature*, and *Gothic Studies*. They were a founding member of the British Association for Contemporary Literary Studies, and teach and research widely across the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

"Has this conversation been helpful so far?" – New alliances and partnerships in writing with AI

Prof. Dr. Katrin Lehnen (*Justus-Liebig University, Giessen*)

The emergence of generative AI is fundamentally changing the nature of writing. Programs like ChatGPT allow us to produce coherent written or multimodal texts at impressive speed—even with



relatively simple prompts. This development is reshaping traditional concepts of authorship and originality. At the same time, the automation of writing has brought about a new dimension of collaborative writing, leading to constellations in which machines act as autonomous participants in the writing process (Lehnen 2023; Steinhoff 2023). AI can be addressed in various roles: It may act as a *ghostwriter*, taking over the writing entirely; as a *writing tutor*, offering support and feedback; or as a *writing partner*, engaging with the human in co-creating the text (Steinhoff, in press). Beyond that, writing with AI doesn't only mean using it to generate texts—so-called “Chat-to-Generate” or “Chat-to-Create”—but also includes a new kind of dialogic co-writing through ongoing interaction, what we might call “Chat-to-Chat” (Steinhoff & Lehnen 2025). In this talk, I explore how these new role constellations and modes of collaboration can be theorized and empirically observed. What kinds of roles and collaborative dynamics emerge when “machine participants” (Steinhoff 2023)—that is, digital infrastructures and writing technologies—are able to automate or even fully take over writing tasks? What kind of co-activity is involved when programs correct or complete words, translate entire texts, or—like generative AI—produce full texts from scratch? And finally: how is collaboration in writing transformed when it is no longer initiated exclusively by humans, but also by machines?

Katrin Lehnen has been Professor of German Language and Media Didactics at Justus Liebig University Giessen since 2007. Her work focuses on the study of writing processes and practices across various domains and institutional contexts. These include academic and professional writing, collaborative and digital writing, and more recently, writing with AI. Her research interests are interdisciplinary, combining questions from linguistics and literary studies (e.g., authorship and memory) with sociological, educational, and language didactic perspectives—such as how writing acquisition and learning are transformed by digitalization (digital habitus). Her academic practice has included serving as the director of the Center for Media and Interactivity (ZMI, now DimL) as well as holding the position of Deputy Representative for Women and Gender Equality at the University of Giessen.

PAPER PRESENTATIONS

Autotheory and the Politics of Writing (About Writing)

Clara Busch (*University of Cambridge*)

The concept of ‘autotheory’ has more recently gained momentum with Lauren Fournier’s monograph *Autotheory as Feminist Practice in Art, Writing, and Criticism* (2021). At the core, autotheory describes the fusion of personal experiences (whether factual or fictional) and the process of theorisation. It flourishes in the space where genre boundaries and disciplinary

categories are challenged. The concept exists in the fluid space between research and artistic creation and complicates the intersectional questions of what constitutes theory and who can be a theorist (Fournier, p. 18). Autotheory is 'critical and it is creative; it is experiential and experimental; it is scholarly, and it is popular. It brings theory to life and life to theory' (Brostoff & Fournier, p. 490). With the help of autotheory, this paper explores the critical aspects of what it means for a literary writer to think, write, and theorise about their own writing. Since autotheory is fundamentally a critical and feminist concept, it enables an analysis of the political (and perhaps even activist) aspects of writing that shape up when the very process and act of writing is written about. To test the methodological potential of autotheory as a genre, a theory, and a practice to reflect on acts of writing, I look at a selection of women writers' poetics/poetry lectures. In these lectures, published as essays, the writers discuss their own writing, producing complex literary pieces in their own right. Autotheory offers a way to appreciate and analyse the reflective, yet generative, performative, interventionist, relational, and critical formal and aesthetic elements present when writers write about writing.

Clara Busch is a first year PhD student in German at the University of Cambridge, where she looks at autotheory and the politics of writing in contemporary German (con)texts and coconvenes the German Graduate Research Seminar. Clara's research is funded by a Cambridge Schröder Scholarship in German Studies. Previously, she studied in Erfurt and Oxford, where she was a research assistant for the Faculty's Policy Engagement project.

Hybrid writing: Between Narrative and Scholarly Discourse. Some Epistemological Reflections From My Experience of Research Perpetrators' Narratives

Miguel Ángel Castro Caballero (*University of Giessen*)

The hardest thing to think of is the narrative form that combines academic essay, cultural criticism, and speculative fiction (or, like Haraway translated, speculative fabulation, from French *narration spéculative*). Like a political scientist, I learnt that my writing cannot be literary, cannot be creative, cannot be fictional. Not only should I resist, but I must also abide by the rules and rhetorical style of political scientist methods to be recognized in the field. Being *detached*, being *descriptive*, being *explanative*. "We talk about it without fuss", would Geertz say. This feeling of discomfort increased when I started my research on perpetrator narratives. Like a chimaera, the perpetrators of mass violence challenge our theoretical framework and hinder traditional scholarly writing that attempts to represent them. From this perspective, Antonius C. G. M. Robben and Alexander Laban Hinton underscore the necessity of adopting a heterogeneous approach to do justice to their

fieldwork experience – both have been researched since the 90s – and the inner complexities of perpetrators. In my presentation, I want to present my epistemological reflections about the challenges associated with this position. Like *Tony and Alex* suggest in their book, *Perpetrators. Encountering Humanity's Dark Side*, creative writing, dialogue, nonfiction, and poetic forms expand the possibilities to shed light on perpetrator research. Through what I call hybrid writing, this creative approach allows us to explore political reality and understand the experiences shaped by periods of violence. Then, how do I write and transmit the perpetrator's experience while remaining detached and unaffected by their testimonies? Well, it's impossible to maintain writing free of scars.

Miguel Ángel Castro Caballero studied a bachelor's in political science and has a master's in literature studies at the National University of Colombia. He is a doctoral student and scholarship holder at the Graduate Center for Studies of the Culture (GCSC), Justus Liebig University Giessen (JLU). He has participated in research projects on political violence, memory politics, and narrative theories. Miguel Ángel Castro Caballero's research focuses on the meanings and senses of political violence in the Colombian social and academic fields. He is part of TEOPOCO's research group (Contemporary Political Theory) at the Faculty of Law and Political Science at the National University of Colombia. His main interest remains in the field of cultural memory, transitional justice narratives, dealing with the past, and conflict transformation.

On the Culture of Denunciatory Pamphleteering in Colonial Algiers

Dr. Khedidja Chergui (*ENSB in Algiers*)

Vitriolic, denunciatory and intended for wide circulation among the population of the city of Algiers (both literate and illiterate), handwritten pamphlets emerged for the first time as powerful means of disseminating the news of the Algerian revolution and the atrocities of the French colonial army. Due to the compulsory closure of mosques, zawiyas and other traditional teaching institutions by the French authorities (as they were perceived as places of anticolonial activism), a large part of the population remained illiterate. This is why pamphlets, (known in Arabic as *كُتَاب*), were written in a simple and accessible language, mostly in street language that is mixed between dialectal Arabic and broken French. In the Kasbah of Algiers, coded pamphleteering was used to exchange information between the mujahideen and the civilians. This paper, as such, traces the emergence of pamphleteering as an act of writing in colonial Algiers (being more popular starting from 1954) and its various uses as a tool of anti-colonial protest and activism.

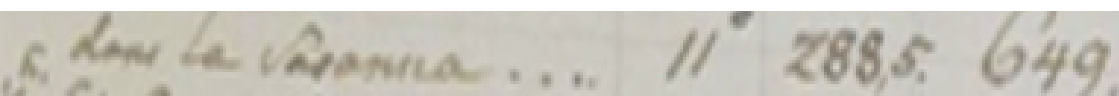
Khedidja Chergui is an associate professor of Postcolonial and World Literature at the Department of English, ENSB in Algiers. Her main areas of research include, among others, postcolonial literature; minority literature; refugee and migrant literature, and African female fiction. Khedidja is a 2018 fellow of the Multinational Institute of American Studies at New York University.

Writing, Retreat and the Condensation of Memory: Marcel Proust and Anna de Noailles

Prof. Dr. Kirsten von Hagen (*University of Giessen*)

Marcel Proust and Anna de Noailles are present in French cultural memory as writers who spent the last days of their lives writing in bed. At the Musée d'Orsay, the writing places of both are on display and can be visited: Lavishly furnished rooms, shielded from the public eye by thick cork walls. It was in this social isolation that the two authors wrote key parts of their works. But it is not only the writing locations that are present in the cultural memory; Proust's 'paperrolles' – rolls of paper that grow to immeasurable proportions and are repeatedly rewritten and overwritten – also bear witness to a process of writing that is reflected in his central work, the *Recherche*, in its own poetics of memory: In the form of the 'mémoire involontaire', the involuntary memory. Letters written by Proust during this period of social retreat, in which he discusses possible external disruptive factors, also bear witness to this. The concentration on worlds of memory, writing in social isolation, finds expression in the epiphanic writing of both authors, who repeatedly thematise a symptom of the illness of their time, neurasthenia. As an antidote, a poetics of memory is installed, condensed in a writing of the moment that borrows from practices of East Asian mindfulness. The lecture will demonstrate the material and performative aspects of the acts of writing in the works of the two modern authors and will also make clear how these acts of writing are reflected in their synaesthetic poetics of memory.

Kirsten von Hagen is professor of Romance Literature and Romance Cultural Studies at the University of Giessen. Her research interests include French and Spanish literature and culture from the 17th to the 21st century, intermedial storytelling, postcolonial aesthetics, literature and economics, reading practices, poetics of memory, inter- and transcultural dynamics. She is the author of *Inszenierte Alterität: Zigeunerfiguren in Literatur, Oper und Film* (Staged Alterity: Gypsy Figures in Literature, Opera and Film, Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 2009) and *Intermediale Liebschaften: Mehrfachadaptationen von Choderlos de Laclos' Les Liaisons dangereuses* (Intermedial Liaisons: Multiple Adaptations of Choderlos de Laclos' *Les Liaisons dangereuses*, Tuebingen 2002). Most recently, she edited the volume *Anna de Noailles, Autorin der Belle Époque, Auteure de la Belle Époque, Actrice de la Modernité* (Baden-Baden: Rombach Wissenschaft, 2024.).



Bureaucratic Fiction, Bureaucratic Scripts: Institutional Writing in *The Palace of Dreams* and *The Beautiful Bureaucrat*

Dr. Alexandra Irmia (University of Bonn)

This presentation examines institutional writing in Ismail Kadare's *The Palace of Dreams* and Helen Phillips's *The Beautiful Bureaucrat*, exploring how bureaucratic fiction interrogates the nature of data-entry, text processing and record-keeping, linking authorship and various writing technologies to authority and the logic of social organization. Drawing on Cornelia Vismann's media theory of files, Jack Goody's *The Logic of Writing and the Organization of Society*, and Michelle LaFrance's "institutional ethnography", I argue that bureaucratic documents possess the authority to reshape the reality they purport to represent. Both novels reveal how institutional writing functions through multiple semiotic regimes beyond the linguistic—incorporating visual, numeric, and oneiric elements—that create more complex inscriptions of power. They also reveal the remarkably self-referential quality of bureaucratic scripts, which engenders circularity and repetition, leading to a paradoxical proliferation despite their ostensible sterility. Central to both narratives is the mutual determination of writing and governance through institutional texts. I examine adjacent bureaucratic processes—storage and retrieval, transfer and circulation, alteration and effacement—that constitute the life cycle of documents within these systems. The concept of the archive (and, in the case of Phillips, "The Database") emerges as an attempted indexical double of the world, yet one that inevitably fails in its totalizing ambitions. Finally, I explore the paratextual features of institutional writing—stamps, signatures, registration numbers—which validate and regulate the flow of documents through institutional channels. Despite their authority, official papers exhibit ontological instability—susceptible to modification, loss, censorship, or disappearance into inaccessible classifications. Through this analysis, I demonstrate how Kadare and Phillips reveal the fundamental paradox of bureaucratic writing: documents that ostensibly stabilize reality through record-keeping ultimately expose its contingency and the fragile nature of institutional state power itself.

Alexandra Irmia is a postdoctoral Humboldt Fellow working on contemporary bureaucratic fiction in world literature and film at the Institute for German, Comparative Literature and Cultural Studies, University of Bonn (IGLK). Before joining the IGLK, she held postdoctoral fellowships at the Eric Auerbach Institute in Cologne and the Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities (KWI) Essen. Her monograph, *Figures of Radical Absence: Blanks and Voids in Theory, Literature, and the Arts* (De Gruyter, 2023, open access), emerged from doctoral work conducted in Romania and Canada and has received the ICLA First Book Subvention Prize from the International Comparative Literature Association. Alexandra also co-edited a special issue of the journal *Administory* on the

topic of administrative cultures and their aesthetics, forthcoming in February 2025. The newsletter *Bureaucritics* is her latest co-editorial project, together with Jonathan Foster. Shorter pieces of her writing live online and/or offline in edited volumes, journals including *Critical Inquiry*, *The Comparatist*, *Discourse*, *Ekphrasis*, and on the *KWI Blog*.

公案 / kōan / công án and the Complexity of Contemporary Narratives: From the Zen Way of Writing to the Zen Way of Reading

Tien-Phat Nguyen (University of Giessen)

“All phenomena are impermanent. Everything that is born must finally die. What is born, and what dies?” (Tuệ Trung Thượng Sĩ) This *công án* was written by a Vietnamese Zen master who also fought alongside his brother, General Trần Hưng Đạo, to repel Mongolian invaders. The tradition of composing *công án* in East Asian Zen Buddhism reflects an intricate blend of religion, politics, and culture in writing practices. The term *công án* (公案 /gōng'àn/ or kōan, 화두) originally referred to an “official or juridical document” or “a document of official value.” It was later adopted in Zen Buddhism to describe “declarations or short conversations between Zen masters and their disciples” (Hanh 2010), and can also be stories, questions, or statements. As such, the writing, dissemination, interpretation, and creative reworking of *công án* is an ongoing and continuous practice in practitioners’ minds. Not only Zen masters but also political leaders in Buddhist-influenced cultural spheres have long engaged in the art of contemplating these texts and have contributed their own renowned ones. This article draws a comparison between this form of literary practice and contemporary writings that are often categorized as “difficult narratives” or narratives with “complexity” (Grishakova & Poulaki 2019; Caracciolo 2024). Both forms present cognitive challenges, suggesting potential influences on the processes of both reading and writing. How might the practices associated with *công án* impact or resemble contemporary literary works, especially when “the Zen way of reading” has been explored for its applicability in textual interpretation? (Alber 2021) What insights can Zen perspectives offer in addressing cognitive issues within postclassical narratologies, which have mainly developed within the Western world? Furthermore, how does the concept of authorship in *công án* differ from the notion of authorial ownership shaped by 19th-century capitalist society, and in what ways might it align with the idea of intertextuality in postmodernism? The answers to these questions will be synthesized in an effort to construct a *công án* of its own as a contribution that offers a multifaceted perspective on how cultural reflections are continuously created, transmitted, and reimagined in contemporary contexts.

Tien Phat Nguyen (Nguyễn Tiến Phát) is a doctoral candidate at the International PhD Programme Literary and Cultural Studies at the GKK (Gießen Graduate Center of Cultural Studies), Justus-Liebig-Universität Gießen. He graduated from the University of Tübingen with a thesis focused on adaptation and is now working on his dissertation: *“Narrative Techniques In The 21st Century: An Intermedial Approach to the Interplay between Theatre, Prose, and Film”*. His research interests include narrative theories; cultural narratologies; World literature, cinema, theatre; neocolonialism; and intermedial studies.

Between Writing and the Body: The Performative Nature of Authorship in Hilda Hilst

Giovana Zamboni Rossi (*Freie Universität Berlin*)

Hilda Hilst's (1930–2004) work challenges traditional conceptions of authorship by staging writing as a performative act that strains the boundaries between identity, language, and the materiality of the body. In texts such as *A Obscena Senhora D* (1982) and *Caderno Rosa de Lori Lamby* (1990), Hilst explores the erasure of the author, discursive fragmentation, and the fusion between narrative voice and corporeality, challenging the notion of authorship as a fixed and stable instance. Inspired by theorists such as Judith Butler and Peggy Phelan, this paper examines how Hilst's writing fits within the field of performativity, understood not only as enactment but as a gesture that creates and unravels identities within the act of enunciation itself. In her play with obscenity, autofiction, and irony, Hilst deconstructs literary conventions and critically reflects on the author's position in the literary tradition, articulating a body that writes and erases itself simultaneously. By blurring the boundaries between literature and life, between authorship and character, Hilst anticipates contemporary discussions on writing and performativity, suggesting that authorship is not a fixed given but an unstable process of self-inscription and displacement. Her work proposes writing as a field for radical experimentation, where authorship becomes an ephemeral gesture, a trace always in disappearance.

Giovana Zamboni Rossi is a historian based in Berlin. She holds a Master's degree in Global History from the Federal University of Santa Catarina and is currently pursuing a Master's in Latin American Studies at the Freie Universität Berlin. Her research focuses on cultural history, memory, narratives, and knowledge-building processes. Giovana has worked as an archival researcher and translator and is presently employed at the Brazilian Embassy in Berlin, where she organizes cultural events and collaborates on diplomatic initiatives. In addition to her academic work, she has experience in content production, editorial review, and ghostwriting in Portuguese, English, Spanish, and German. She is also continuing to publish her own literary work.

Writing one:others

Dr. Delphine Chapuis Schmitz (*Zurich University of Arts ZHdK*)

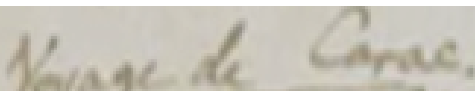
“The text is a tissue of citations, resulting from the thousand sources of culture”: In a lecture performance entitled *Writing one:others* I propose to flesh out Barthes’ words and explore writing as a material process engaging the writer’s body as well as existing textualities. The lecture performance unfolds from a selection of quotations from the fields of literature, critical theory, poetry, philosophy. As the texts passages are woven into a textured composition, the primacy of the individual author as origin is deconstructed, further echoing Barthes’ statement: “We know that a text does not consist of a line of words, releasing a single (...) meaning (...), but is a space of many dimensions, in which are wedded and contested various kinds of writing, no one of which is original.” (Barthes 1967). The act of writing is both questioned in its origins and activated as an embodied, situated and relational process. As the body performs and expands writing by bringing together a multiplicity of voices and perspectives, a hybrid textuality emerges from a series of shifts and displacements, moving between languages (English, German, French, Italian), switching from the academic to the poetic through the po(i)etic, and opening up to unforeseen resonances beyond established frames and categories.

Delphine Chapuis Schmitz (F/CH) works as an artist-researcher, as an artist-writer, as a writer-teacher, as a teacher-translator. Her field of research revolves around embedded and embodied practices of making sense, the po(i)ethical potentials of language-s, and the exploration of meaningful relationalities in sensory entanglements. Developing a relational and performative practice of writing is at the core of her situated research, which involves collaborative constellations of various kinds and making-thinking from a transversal perspective. She holds a PhD in Philosophy from the University Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne and an MA in Fine Arts from the Zurich University of the Arts ZHdK. She currently teaches and researches at the Department of Cultural Analysis at ZHdK and is co-founder of DEARS, a platform for writing practices at the intersection of poetry, art and experimental writing.

"Messieurs, je ne puis pas écrire autrement qu'une femme, puisque j'ai l'honneur d'être femme." – Jenny P. d'Héricourt's 'Reparative' Dialogic Act of Writing in *La femme affranchie* (1860)

Marie-Theres Stickel (*University of Giessen*)

It was only in the late 1980s, after the (re-)discovery of her biographical data, that the French writer Jenny P. d'Héricourt (1809-1875) received more scholarly attention, particularly in history and



Vierge de Corne.

sociology. Studying Héricourt from a literary and cultural studies perspective reveals the myriad of structural barriers to female-coded authorship in 19th century France, regarding political and activist writing, institutional and academic ties, as well as material and economic conditions of (text) production. Since she wrote not only as an (early) sociologist, journalist or novelist, but also as a philosopher, teacher, midwife and medical practitioner, her writing practices can be considered today as deeply interdisciplinary, embedded in the philosophical, scientific, social(ist), and feminist contexts of her time. This paper examines her work *La femme affranchie* (1860) in which Héricourt develops a comprehensive (re-)conceptualisation of women's social roles in various spheres of society – in labour, industry, law, education, marriage, and family. She engages in a highly 'dialogical' act of writing, grappling with the so-called 'novateurs modernes' such as Pierre-Joseph Proudhon or Auguste Comte. By writing not only to argue, but also to answer (*répondre*), to accuse (*accuser*), to dispel (*réfuter*), to vindicate (*revendiquer*), and to reason (*raisonner*), Héricourt's act of writing becomes a multi-layered cultural practice. It is concerned with an alternative (in the sense of non-hegemonic) construction of sociological and economic knowledge and represents a complex sociopolitical form of authorship. The paper focuses on Héricourt's acts of writing, which are entangled with the publicist environment and socio-theoretical infrastructures of her time. It explores her as an activist literaryeconomic writer who both creates and participates in an epistemic "scene"; understood as a concrete social space in which 'reparative' cultural writing practices are staged, responsive to the knowledge of others (in reading, doubting, interpreting and recomposing).

Marie-Theres Stickel studied English and Romance languages, literature and culture, business economics and comparative literature in Giessen (DE) and Dijon (FR). She works as a research assistant at the Chair of French Literature and Cultural Studies of Professor Dr. Kirsten von Hagen (JLU Giessen). Her research interests include literature and economics (specialising in 19th-century French literature), reading studies, as well as feminist literary and cultural theory. After working for a publishing house in Frankfurt am Main, she returned to Giessen in 2024 as a member of the research project 'Economic Agnosticism: Doubting Economic Knowledge in 19th Century Literature and Sociology' (Prof Dr Kirsten von Hagen/ Prof Dr Andreas Langenohl, JLU), funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG). In her PhD project, she is working on the mediation of a 'female-coded economic agnosticism' in French literary texts of the long nineteenth century.

Writing for the Body

Prof. Dr. Gerald Siegmund (*University of Giessen*)

In my contribution to this conference, I will give a brief overview of the relation between writing, choreography, the body and movement. Choreography, as it was conceived of the the 17th century, started out as a semiotic practice that wrote or notated dances on paper before they were even handed over to dancing masters to practice. At the turn of the 20th century, with the advent of modern dance, this writing practice was thoroughly revised. Rather than writing for the body, modern dancers wrote with the body. Towards the end of the 1990s, with the conceptual turn in European dance and performance, choreographers rejected of their modernist predecessors ideas about choreography. While authors write on the white page, French choreographer Jérôme Bel who will serve as my example, holds that he writes for the black box of the theatre.

Gerald Siegmund is Professor of Applied Theatre Studies at the Justus-Liebig University in Giessen, Germany. Until 2011 he directed the “Choreography and Performance” programme at the Giessen Institute. Form September 2024 until May 2025 he was fellow at the Käte-Hamburger Research Centre Global *dis:connect* at LMU Munich. His research focuses on forms of contemporary theatre, dance, and performance, aesthetics, theories of memory, and the intermediality of theatre in relation to the visual arts. Gerald Siegmund is author of more than 100 articles on contemporary dance and theatre performance. His most recent book publications are: *Choreographie als Kulturtechnik*, together with Sabine Huschka, Berlin: Neofelis Verlag, 2022 und *Theater- und Tanzperformance zur Einführung*: Hamburg: Junius Verlag, 2020

On the Emergence and Development of Autoethnography in Germany

Dr. Anna Gonzalez Suero (*Bauhaus Universität Weimar*)

In my presentation I will describe how the research methodology of autoethnography seeks to challenge the standard of academic writing. Autoethnography is a critical form of cultural inquiry through personal storytelling. My presentation will discuss the recent history and current state of autoethnography at German universities, where the use of "I" in academic papers is still debated and not as accepted as in English-speaking universities. Especially in traditional German academia, autoethnographic writing sparks debate because of the way it values an emotionally engaging, personal writing style that explores the memories and experiences of the researcher(s) as sources of knowledge. My presentation will be based on a literature review in which I analyzed explicitly autoethnographic texts written by researchers in Germany over a period of almost two decades,



beginning in 2007 and ending in August 2024. Through a comparison of the development of the methodology in Spain and in the United States, I identify and discuss the key features that characterize autoethnography in Germany and its particular development.

Anna Gonzalez Suero is the author of *An Artistic Autoethnography on the Public Fetus: Feminist Perspectives* (Routledge, 2025). She earned her PhD in Art from Goldsmiths, University of London. After completing her PhD, Gonzalez Suero was awarded a postdoctoral scholarship in the Faculty of Art and Design at the Bauhaus University Weimar for her project titled "Storying Artistic Research Using Methods of Autoethnography."

Women Writers in Southeast Europe, an Explorative Study on the Professionalisation of Writing Occupation

Dr. Zsófia Turóczy (*University of Graz*)

Musine Kokalari (1917-1983) is considered to be the first Albanian writer, or at least the first Albanian woman to publish a book. However, she was convicted at the age of 29 for political reasons and was not allowed to publish for the rest of her life. Her life raises questions: How has the profession of women writers developed historically in Southeastern Europe? What challenges have women writers faced in these countries? How have women thought about their writing as a profession? Several studies have been published on the professionalization of female writing (Fleig 2023; Williams 2013; Todd 1989). However, these works mainly focussed on the Global North. Eastern and Southeastern Europe seems to be a white spot in this regard (too). There is only a few case studies published on female writers in this region (Moroşan 2022, Tomašević, Pözl, Reithofer 2006). In an explorative study, I aim to draw on Bourdieu's concept of symbolic capital and habitus theory to examine the (specific) challenges of women as writers in Southeast Europe from a cultural-historical perspective. I am interested in how women's access to the literary field has been shaped historically and how this access has changed in the context of social power structures. I will put the Albanian women writers in the foreground, but I will relate them to other female authors as well as to regional and transnational developments and dynamics.

Zsófia Turóczy is a university assistant (post-doc) at the University of Graz. She defended her doctoral thesis "Freemason Networks in Southeast Europe (1886-1920)" at the Department of "Comparative Cultural and Social History" of Leipzig University in December 2023. Before starting her Ph.D., she graduated from "Southeast European Studies" at the Friedrich-Schiller University in Jena (2015). She holds two further Masters's degrees, one in "Arts in German Language and Literature" (2011) and another Master's in "Arts in Hungarian Language and Literature" (2009) at

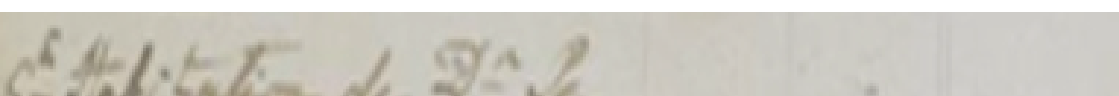
the Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest. She spent two years in Tirana, Albania, as a DAAD language assistant. Her fields of interest include culture of remembrance, literature, culture, and history of Southeast Europe, focusing on Albania, Kosovo, Turkey and Hungary.

Gilbert Trausch and his “Zauberhefte”: How a historian organised his working practices in the second half of the 20th century

Dr. Renée Wagener (*Independent Historian, Luxembourg*)

The working process of the historian encompasses a panoply of routines, from the research in archives and libraries and the selection of sources and literature over writing and storing notes and citations, developing a text structure, enriching it by more and more detailed sentences, to the final writing and correcting of the manuscript. This process mirrors not only the scientific customs and norms and the technical and mediatic conditions of a certain time period, but also the individual ways of dealing with them, of accepting or trespassing the boundaries set for academic work, thus presenting an important aspect of intellectual history. At the example of the Luxembourgish historian Gilbert Trausch (1931-2018), this contribution explores the fundamental change historical writing has undergone from the analogue to the digital era. Trausch, for some decades Luxembourg’s most famous historian, belonged to a generation of researchers who worked with pencil and paper and read printed books and photocopied articles. At the same time however, Trausch also showed an individualist approach: instead of elaborating a card index, he developed a technique of his own by relying on what he called “Zauberhefte” (magical books), meaning loose pages held together in A5 ring binders and arranged thematically by keywords. The Zauberhefte thus constituted a nodal point between the reflection and text work and the private library with its books and photocopies. Since the late 1980s, the historian was however more and more confronted with the fact that digitalisation of scientific work did not spare historiography: for instance, library catalogues were being transferred to the Internet, the PC became a standard working tool and e-mail systems would supersede paper correspondence. Trausch’s case therefore also stands for individual ways of coping with the impact of digitalisation on the production of historiographical texts, and more generally on day-to-day scientific work.

Renée Wagener is a Luxembourgish historian. Her PhD dissertation of 2017 treated the history of Judaism and Antisemitism in Luxembourg. She collaborated in different research projects on contemporary history at the University of Luxembourg, notably on emancipation movements. From 2018 to 2020, she was a co-commissioner for an exhibition on the introduction of universal suffrage in Luxembourg. From 2020 to 2022, Wagener participated in a research project on the



cultural and material practices of the historian Gilbert Trausch, led by the “Institut d’histoire” and the “Centre for Contemporary and Digital History” of the University of Luxembourg. Currently, she is working as an independent historian.

Ich hab vor dem getreng nit horen mögen, was hieruber gerödt worden.” Early Modern Recording Practices by the Example of Imperial Diets Minutes

Dr. Florian Zeilinger (*University of Graz*)

Considering proto-parliamentary estates assemblies of the Early Modern Period, parliamentary negotiation can be viewed in its historical depth and in its European/Western cultural history. Unlike today’s publicly accessible parliamentary minutes, however, the minutes of the irregularly held 16th-century Imperial Diets of the Holy Roman Empire, for example, are not verbatim transcripts of the speeches and “votes” of individual political actors. Instead, written by (partly legally) educated, ergo: (semi-)professional envoys or scribes, they summarised the content of official meetings and irregular communication events for internal use. This corresponded to the proto-parliamentary culture, which was by no means democratic or transparent in the modern sense. Diet personnel documented what the author could hear, as he interpreted it, and thus reflected historical protocolisation and writing practices, which were primarily investigated for later centuries, and the use of certain terms and phrases. This must be taken into account in any methodologically sound indexing of records. As a recently published study on topic modelling attempts based on the Imperial Diet records of 1576 showed, thematic keywords can be found just as systematically as designations of individual procedural steps and typical documentation methods (e.g. “speaker X: *similiter*”). Authors usually recede into the background, just as speakers are hidden behind the name of their group or legation. In view of new studies on the development of the “legalese” as well as after the topic modelling attempts mentioned above, the question of who followed which patterns and documented which sessions and how is therefore all the more interesting. To this end, in a proposed future project, minutes of the same sessions of an Imperial Diet as well as various minutes from the beginning, middle and end of the 16th century are to be evaluated semi-automatically to reflect on early modern proto-parliamentary writing practices.

Florian Zeilinger received his doctorate with a dissertation published in 2022 on the restoration of honour lost due to crime around 1600. He was involved in several projects on digital editions, from 2019/2024 on the edition of the records of the Imperial Diet of Regensburg 1576, and has published extensively on the subject. In 2025, he published the anthology “Digital Edition and Pre-Modern Parliamentarism”, edited by him, Roman Bleier and Josef Leeb. Currently, he is a lecturer at the

University of Graz and has contributed to a project proposal for the cross-edition indexing of persons and topics in Imperial Diet records.

POSTER PRESENTATIONS

A Study on the Adaptation of Myths in the Translation of Indian fiction to English

Ammu Maria Ashok (*Amity University, Haryana*)

Myths have this perception that they are best viewed as an idea or a concept, but Barthes argued that myths are a type of speech; in fact, language needs special conditions to become a myth that “communicates”. Myths in India, as elsewhere, have been conveyed mainly through discourse which included both oral and written. The present study is about one such discourse, in both original and translated versions. The Hindu myth of *Draupadi* is one such representation of all woman who exists in the collective imagination of India, as depicted in literature. She has also been a symbol of early feminist voice because of her fearlessness in admonishing those who harmed her or her family. The myths of the five *Pandavas* and *Draupadi* had been adopted and portrayed by many authors in different novels and some of them are translated to English. The present study deals with the narratives of *Draupadi* in the selected translated texts, originally written in Indian languages and translated to English falls in this category. The texts portrays the agency and will of the feminine spirit. It also depicts the transformation of the trope across time and space, grounded in the changing notion of femininity, sexuality and raising of female voices in Indian fiction. The present study portrays how the translator brings the different dimensions of *Draupadi* and the symbolic depiction of the epic story of *Pandavas* or *Kauravas* through their translation.

Ammu Ashok is a Research Scholar for the Department of Applied Linguistics at Amity University, Haryana. She is also a poet, translator and educator. Her works have been featured in many anthologies, books and electronic media. She was honoured with the ‘Distinguished Poet Award 2023’ in the International Rabindranath Tagore Poetry Prize 2023. Her poems have been featured among 14 nationalities in the International Human Rights magazine, USA, and a poem in translation appeared in Kerala Sahitya Akademi Journal’s recent issue of March 2024.

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Ways to Write Methodologies of International Open Data Benchmarks

Ievgen Bilyk (University of Giessen)

In this presentation, I aim to understand international open data benchmarks by analyzing how their methodological chapters are written. This topic is relevant due to the prominent development of open data in many countries since the launch of the Open Government Partnership in 2011, a global initiative that seeks “to promote transparent, participatory, inclusive and accountable governance” (Open Government Partnership, 2025). Making government data accessible to citizens is its key pillar, above which more advanced participatory mechanisms can be built (Fraundorfer, 2017, p. 614). The scholars observe that publishing such data serves as one of the key indicators of how democratic governments collaborate with their constituents (Attard et al., 2015, p. 400). However, the progress on open data initiatives varies across the globe (Wessels et al., 2017, p. 54) and mostly developed countries score high on it without consistent leaders emerging across different assessments (Zuiderwijk, Pirannejad & Susha, 2021, p. 12). To understand how this progress is measured, the methodological chapters of five existing open data reports will be scrutinized via the lens of sociology of quantification, particularly its critique of composing aggregate numbers for countries (Mennicken & Espeland, 2019, p. 232) and oversimplifying global performance indicators (Ringel, 2023, p. 190). This approach will be complemented with infrastructure studies to address the issues of transforming information in the process of knowledge production via gatekeepers (Edwards et al., 2009, p. 367) and the interrelatedness of measurement tools and their authors (Jensen & Winthereik, 2013, p. 13). It is planned to conduct qualitative document analysis (Morgan, 2022) of the methodological chapters of five selected benchmarks to delineate their premises by key criteria based on the mentioned theoretical framework. As a result, I will demonstrate how knowledge about open data is constructed.

Ievgen Bilyk is a PhD candidate at the International Graduate Centre for the Study of Culture, Justus Liebig University Giessen, Germany. His dissertation topic is *How Knowledge About Open Data Is Created: Analysis of Formal International Rankings and Community-Based Practices*. In his research project, he demonstrates how knowledge about open data can be constructed more democratically by looking into formal international rankings of open data development and community-based practices of open data use in specific countries from a critical perspective of the social studies of knowledge. Ievgen Bilyk’s academic background is in science and technology studies, e-governance technologies and services, and sociology. His previous experience includes more than seven years in international development projects with a focus on digital initiatives.

Embodied Texts: The Ontology of ASL Performance in Digital and Physical Writing Spaces

Mohit Joshi (BITS Law School, Mumbai)

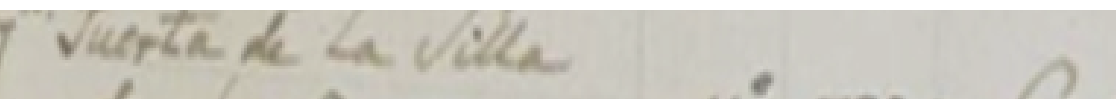
The space of 'writing' and the space of 'performance' find an intersection in case of ASL literature. The metaphysics of writing opens many facets from being the space for Being to manifest (Heidegger) to being a carrier of absence (Derrida); from being a function of the writing medium (Kittler) to the medium being the message itself (McLuhan). Whereas, the metaphysics of 'performance space' differs in its fundamental reliance on presence, whether it is creating the performance space through bodily movements and interactions (Merleau-Ponty; Fischer-Lichte) or a resistance to a commodification of such a space (Phelan). This paper examines Debbie Rennie's ASL poem performance "Boycott Veal" to study the spaces of writing and performance when the acts of performance and writing become one. ASL literature, unlike literatures of spoken languages, are documented in video formats, and by extension on digital platforms. This research aims to delineate the live and the mediated in a performance to explore the act of 'writing', questioning if the embodied nature of ASL poem-performance holds the same ontological import in a digital space as it does in a physical space.

Mohit Joshi has submitted their PhD thesis in the department of Humanities and Social Sciences of Malaviya National Institute of Technology, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India. They graduated as an engineer from LNM Institute of Information Technology, and pursued a master's in English literature from the University of Rajasthan. They have qualified for the National Eligibility Test (NET) twice. They are currently working in the writing centre at BITS Law School, Mumbai, India. They have presented and published research papers on themes like Sign Languages and Linguistics, Digital Humanities, comparative literature, In-yer-face Theatre of Sarah Kane, and gender representation in films. Their research interests include: Existentialist literature, Modern Drama and Theatre and Visual Arts in literature.

Acts of Writing: Autobiographical Articulations from Kerala

Aparna R. (Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay)

The genre of autobiography has been an important mode of feminist self-fashioning in multiple ways. In the literary culture scape of the state of Kerala, India, there have been instances where authors have withdrawn confessional autobiographies after publication with the declaration that it had been 'fiction' (*My Story* (1973) by Kamala Das) or have rewritten a second version of the same autobiography within one year (*The Autobiography of a Sex-worker* (2005) by Nalini Jameela). My



paper would like to focus on a more recent addition to this continuum of controversial best sellers by a novice feminist writer who uses the pen name of Echmukutty. Packaged as an autobiography by the publishers, the book is titled *Ithente Rakthamaanithente Maamsamaaneduthu Kolluka* (2019) (which roughly translates to 'this is my blood, this is my flesh, take these'), an allusion to the famous Biblical verse where Jesus asks his followers to partake of his flesh and blood. Interestingly, this work is a compilation of a series of Facebook posts that Echmukutty started posting in 2018, chronicling her life over the past three decades. In what might resemble #MeToo moments, several popular icons of Malayalam literary and cultural spheres have also been exposed as part of her writing. The author has revealed in interviews that her narrative couldn't have been made possible without the space offered by social media. It is this changing writing scape and what it does to the notion and fluidity of the autobiographical mode that the paper intends to examine closely.

Aparna R. is a Ph.D. Research Scholar (2016 Dec.- ongoing) at the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay, India. Aparna R. completed an M.Phil in English at the University of Hyderabad, Telangana, India, in 2015. Aparna R.'s dissertation focuses on the emergence of the 'complaining woman' in Kerala post-2000s and looks at a set of autobiographical writings by women from the Malayalam language-speaking world that use the register of the complaint to negotiate the quotidian.

